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any but those to whom it was given. And no war has been right since, unless commanded by God, or unless the circumstances of the case have been such plain indications as to be equivalent to an express precept.

Take another view. One nation was never made, or constituted to govern another nation, but to govern only their own subjects. Besides, the public sense of all civilized nations is against the principle of war. Open war is a duel between two nations. And the principle involved is the right of two men, to attempt to destroy each other. And yet the idea of this practice and principle is now repudiated by all civilized nations. And some have declared, that the killing of a man in a duel is murder in the first degree. To be consistent, they must adopt the same view of a duel, however large the scale may be upon which it is fought.

Again; we have the opinion of an apostle on this subject. He declares, without qualification, that wars and fightings arise from the lusts that war in our members. Nothing can be plainer than that the whole Bible forbids all such lusts, or evil passions, and, consequently, all the conduct which springs from them.

I remember that a celebrated king once called several of his subjects around him. His object was to explain the fundamental principles of his government, in the administration of which he was about to employ those then collected. And among other important remarks, I find the following: "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God." And they paid careful attention to it; and just so far as they were able to disseminate that spirit, they were at the greatest distance from all kinds of contention. Let the rulers and subjects of every kingdom cultivate that spirit, and *wars for ever cease.*

ARTICLE VI.

OBJECTIONS TO THE PRINCIPLES OF PEACE.*

ONE of the principal arguments drawn from the New Testament, on which the defenders of war rest their vindication, is taken from the remark of John the Baptist to the soldiers who came to him, saying, "And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man; neither accuse any falsely; *and be content with your wages.*" Luke iii. 14. It is argued from this passage, that John allowed the soldiers to take their wages, and thereby sanctioned war.

I. I might easily evade this argument, by pleading that the ministration of John was no part of the Christian dispensation, which had

* This article is an abridgment of three sections in a recent pamphlet on "Obstacles and Objections to the Cause of Peace." The writer rarely attempts to distinguish the *cause* of Peace from certain *principles* still in dispute among the professed friends of this cause. The objections here considered lie not against the cause, but against the supposition that the gospel forbids *all* war; and we have therefore changed the title in accordance with its real design and character.—ED. ADV.

not yet commenced ; but as some sects of Christians think the authority of John to be equal to that of any of the apostles, I will admit it for argument sake. Yet the apostles themselves were not fully aware of the peaceful nature of the religion of Jesus Christ until "the day of Pentecost was fully come," when they were filled with the "Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." After they were thus inspired, they never gave the least countenance to war in any form ; but all their precepts inculcated a spirit directly the opposite to war in every particular.

2. A candid inquirer after truth from the word of God does not split texts apart, and, taking that part which suits him, reject the other. By this means, the Bible may be made to say almost any thing. In this case, take the whole sentence together, and what does it say ? "*Do violence to no man.*" Now, if all the soldiers in the world would obey this injunction of John the Baptist, and do violence to no man, wars would cease.

3. These were *Roman* soldiers, and consequently idolaters ; and idolatry constituted a part of their military duty, as they were obliged to worship their standards, and the image of Cæsar. If the injunction of John, to be content with their wages, would justify war, it would also justify idolatry ; and it would justify all the conquests, tyranny and oppression of pagan Rome. But, it is asked, Why did not John take this opportunity to condemn the practice of war ? In addition to what has been already said about his own light and knowledge on the subject, I might as reasonably ask, why he did not take this opportunity to condemn idolatry, polygamy, unnatural lust, licentiousness, and all the horrible vices of the Roman camp ? His silence on the subject does not prove that he sanctioned war, any more than its accompanying vices. Certainly, his injunction, "*Do violence to no man,*" goes as far to condemn war, as any other remark of his to the soldiers did to discountenance any other sin ; and the friends of peace could quote the whole verse in their favor with much more plausibility than the defenders of war.

4. It is a principle of exegesis generally allowed, that scripture should never be so interpreted as to contradict itself. Now this passage, and one other, relating to the two swords, are the only two texts, taken from the gospel, which, for many years, I have heard quoted in defence of war ; and if these be sufficient to justify war, then our Saviour's sermon on the mount, and all his subsequent precepts of a peaceful nature, together with his example, and the precepts and example of the apostles after the day of Pentecost, must go for nothing. So much do the abettors of war call on us to sacrifice, that they may be enabled to support a custom which has, from the murder of Abel to the present day, covered the earth with blood, and made it resound with lamentation and wo, and sent millions of souls to perdition.

I now come to the text on which the abettors of war chiefly rely for defence. Luke xxii. 36. "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." "Here," say our opponents, "notwithstanding all the prophecies which predicted our Saviour as the Prince of peace, and under the influence of whose principles the nations should *learn* war no more (Isaiah ii. 4 ; Micah iv. 3) ; notwithstanding that his precepts and example had hitherto been eminently pacific, he did now, at last, by this single sentence, authorize violence, blood-

shed, and war!" I confess the accusation appears to me like impiety and blasphemy; and I grieve that the prevalence of depravity in the world, and unbelief in the church, should make it necessary to clear our blessed Saviour's character from a charge of such gross inconsistency. But as it is, I must proceed to the task, "more in sorrow than in anger."

It is very certain that these swords were not for defence; for—1. When the disciples replied, "Lord, behold here are two swords," "He said unto them, It is enough." Now it is certain, that *two* swords were not "enough" for twelve men, if they had any intention of defending themselves by physical force. 2. When Peter did take one of these two swords, in his rash zeal to defend his Master, so far from approving of his conduct, Jesus rebuked him, and healed the ear which Peter had smitten off. 3. He had no need of two swords for defence, who could command "more than twelve legions of angels." 4. The apostles and their immediate successors did not understand the abovenamed passage as authorizing war, either offensive or defensive; for we have no record in the canon of Scripture, that any one of them did ever, after that memorable night on which Jesus prohibited the use of the sword to his disciples, take the sword even for defence; though there is no example in history, if we except that of the Jews, where a sect has been so persecuted and oppressed; and none would have so good a right, judging after the manner of men, to take the sword as they. And this was not owing to cowardice, but principle, and a firm belief that the Christian religion forbids the use of the sword for any purposes of bloodshed; for in many provinces of the Roman empire, the Christians were a large minority, and in some a majority of the population. Ancient fathers of the church and ecclesiastical history confirm this fact, which I could prove by manifold quotations, if I had room; but two remarks must suffice. 1. When Celsus, the great enemy of Christianity in the second century, accused the Christians of refusing to bear arms, even in case the empire was invaded by the barbarians, Origen, one of the most eminent Christian fathers of the day, in answer to Celsus, does not deny a fact of such general notoriety, but justifies the refusal of the Christians, on the ground that it was not lawful for them to bear arms, and inconsistent with their religion. 2. Gibbon, in his "*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*," says of the early Christians—whom he seems to hate almost as much as Celsus did—"Nor could their humane ignorance be convinced, that it was lawful on any occasion to shed the blood of our fellow-creatures, either by the sword of justice, or that of *war*, even though their criminal or hostile attempts should threaten the peace and safety of the whole community." (Chap. xv.) When Christianity became corrupted by an union with the state, Christians took the sword; and they not only perished by the sword, but they brought a legion of corruptions into the church by means of war; and we now see but the bare dawning of the Reformation. 5. If we put the construction on the passage which our opponents contend for, we must do violence to all the peaceful precepts of Christ and his holy apostles, as well as to their example, and the example of the primitive Christians, that "noble army of martyrs" who suffered public execution sooner than take the sword for any consideration whatever, and also the obvious meaning of the prophecies which foretold the pacific character of the

Messiah and his religion; and thus destroy the most incontestible proof of the truth of our holy religion, and leave the world without any revelation from heaven, but one inconsistent with itself.

But our opponents, with great confidence, ask "Why were the disciples commanded to sell their garments, and buy swords, if they were not to use them?" We have, I think, plainly proved that it was *not* to justify war, offensive or defensive, and that ought to satisfy them. There are difficulties in the Scriptures, which neither they nor we can solve, in the present state of imperfection; but I will hazard one conjecture, in addition to the other glosses which have been given on this passage, either of which would be more in harmony with the gospel than that which our opponents contend for. Our Saviour often used figurative expressions, which were not fully comprehended by his disciples until they were explained by him. Such was his injunction: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves saying, It is because we have taken no bread." Matt. xvi. 6, 7. In this instance, the Saviour explained his meaning to them. In the case of the two swords, for wise reasons, he left them in an error for a while. In a few hours he would practically show his meaning. The apostles kept the two swords with them. They were "enough"—if not for defence—to show his meaning. And when one of them was used, he rebuked him who used it, healed the wound, and gave this his last commandment before his crucifixion: "Put up again thy sword into his place," with this denunciation, "for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword." Matt. xxvi. 52. Our Saviour's advent into the world was hailed by songs of angels, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." Luke ii. 4. His first public discourse was full of peace; his last command before he suffered was, "Put up thy sword;" his last denunciation was on those who used it; and his last prayer was for his enemies; thus producing a beautiful harmony through the whole of his ministration, which harmony our opponents are laboring to destroy.

But our opponents still reply, "How came these two swords among the apostles?" To this we answer, In that warlike age, every man had a sword; and a sword being always at hand, it would be used for many purposes which in this peaceful age and country we do not think of—just as rum is, or has been used for many purposes which the next generation will hardly think of. It is not probable, that all the apostles had thrown away their swords; but some two or three of them might have been kept for useful purposes. Now, if it should happen that a Quaker fishing-boat should be captured by a man-of-war, would the captor be justified in treating a crew of eleven men as warriors, because two fowling-pieces were found on board the prize, though they might have been old muskets, and formerly used in war? Besides, the apostles were not yet indoctrinated in the peaceful principles of the gospel. If they had been, they would not have fallen under the just rebuke of their Master for asking his permission to call down fire from heaven to consume the inhabitants of a Samaritan village, or smitten a poor servant, and cut off his ear. In both cases, our Saviour showed his disciples that they knew not what spirit they were of; and many of his disciples of the present day are under the same mistake, and deserve the same rebuke.

There are a few other objections drawn from the gospel, which I have not known to be advanced for many years; but as they may come up again, I think it best to give them a passing notice.

1. One of them is the expression of Christ concerning the centurion who came to him requesting him to heal a servant. Christ said of the centurion, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." It has been argued from this, that Jesus did not disapprove of the occupation of the Roman soldier. To this it may be answered,—1. That the commendation of Christ was on the *faith* of the centurion in the ability and willingness of Jesus to heal an absent person barely by his word, and not on his profession. Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, was commended by Paul for her *faith*, manifested in receiving the spies; but I never heard that any one justified her *profession* on that account, though there would be as good a reason as our opponents have. 2. The Messiah did not directly interfere with the existing relations of society. He left polygamy, slavery, war, and a thousand other sins without any pointed rebuke; but he established principles, that, if applied, will ultimately destroy them all. It is *our* duty to *make* that application. 3. If Christ was silent as to the profession of the centurion, so he was as to his religion; and the Roman soldier was without doubt an idolater. 4. If the silence of our Saviour on the occupation of the centurion would justify any war, it would also justify the cruel, unjust and unprovoked wars of the Roman armies, of which the centurion was a part.

2. Another objection is founded on the case of Cornelius, another centurion, to whom Peter was sent to impart the gospel to him. It is said that it is no where recorded in Scripture that he quitted the profession of arms. We answer, 1. That many publicans and harlots were also converted; but it is not recorded that they quitted their occupation. We have however good reason to conclude that they did; and we have as good reason to conclude that Cornelius did, as that Rahab did, or any harlot or publican, after they came to a knowledge of the truth; but nothing is expressly stated in one case more than in another. 2. The fourth answer in the preceding paragraph is equally applicable here.

3. Another objection is, "Christ paid tribute-money to the Roman emperor, and thereby supported his wars, which he would not have done, if war were contrary to his religion." To this it may be answered, that though a part of the tribute-money went to support the Roman armies in carrying on their cruel, unjust and rapacious wars of conquest, a part also went to support the voluptuous vices of the Roman emperors, gladiatorial shows, and the worship of idols. If this objection would justify one of these uses of the tribute-money, it would also justify the others.

EXCUSES FOR WAR.—Its advocates often cull out extreme cases to justify it; but they might as well justify lying, because it may save life or property. They justify war, because God has sometimes overruled it for good; but they might as well justify assassination, because tyrants have sometimes been removed by such means; or the slave trade, because it has brought some Africans into a saving acquaintance with the gospel; or duelling, because it has sometimes saved the state the expense of a halter.